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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of former State Representative and State Senator, William "Bill" Shaw of Dolton, who recently passed away; and

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WHEREAS, William "Bill" Shaw was born as a twin, July 31, 1937 in Hope, Arkansas, to McKinley and Gertrude Shaw; he was the fifth of six siblings; at an early age, the family relocated to Chicago, where he completed his formal education and continued his spiritual growth; as an adult, he united with Grant Memorial AME Church; and

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WHEREAS, William and his wife Shirley raised three children, Gina, Victor Andre, and Shawn, on Chicago's Southside, providing them with love, as well as a first hand taste for the political atmosphere of the day; as a teen, always working side by side with his twin, Robert, William discovered a passion for politics and government; he took the political astuteness he learned on Chicago's Westside and took it with him when he relocated to the Southside; serving in various positions in government over the years, William found numerous avenues to help others; and

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WHEREAS, In 1982, after many years in local government,

1 William Shaw was sworn into the State legislature as
2 Representative of the 34th District; after the re-districting
3 following the 1990 Census, he moved further south to the
4 Village of Dolton, where he successfully ran for the Illinois
5 Senate, representing the 15th District; at the urging of the
6 community, Senator Shaw ran for Mayor of Dolton and, in 1997,
7 was elected its first African-American mayor; in both houses of
8 the General Assembly, William Shaw worked tirelessly to pass
9 legislation that positively impacted the lives of his
10 constituents; one of the efforts he was most proud of was the
11 ground breaking legislation he and Senator Emil Jones passed
12 mandating that African-American history be taught in all
13 Illinois public schools; and

14 WHEREAS, He served as a member of the Senate Energy &
15 Environment Committee and the Education Committee while at the
16 Statehouse; as a member of the Senate Local Government
17 Committee, he was instrumental in the redevelopment of the
18 Historic Pullman District on Chicago's Southside; he also
19 sponsored legislation that created the Illinois Donor Program
20 with the Illinois Secretary of State's Office; during his
21 tenure as Senator, he was truly one who brought home the bacon,
22 securing millions in funding that improved the quality of life
23 and services throughout the 15th District; the building of the
24 Melanie Fitness Center, a state-of-the-art health and fitness
25 center, was one such improvement; and

1 WHEREAS, William Shaw was most definitely a people person;
2 he loved gathering a group of politically aware people around
3 him to discuss, and often argue current political issues; he
4 was a mentor, a teacher, a champion, and a father figure for
5 many aspiring to serve in government; as a legislator and mayor
6 he made youth, education, and health high priorities; his
7 desire was to provide computers for every school in his
8 district, and he did; and

9 WHEREAS, As mayor, he founded the Mayor William "Bill"
10 Shaw's Youth Leadership Academy, which mentors junior and
11 senior high school students in the development of their public
12 service commitment; he awarded numerous scholarships to
13 college bound students, and donated Village land to the Park
14 District to build the Dolton Little League "Field of Dreams";
15 near and dear to his heart was the Village's "Crossroads to
16 Health" Annual Cancer Walk, raising awareness for the need for
17 more funding to find a cure; the money raised goes to the
18 Jennifer S. Fallick Cancer Center, which provides social and
19 support services for families of cancer patients; and

20 WHEREAS, Mayor Shaw was known to work across both party and
21 racial lines to bring about positive results; his desire was
22 that Dolton be a first class place for families to live; he was
23 a mayor with an open door policy; he was a hands-on leader who

1 could often be seen riding through the Village checking on the
2 community he loved; during snow season, it was not unusual to
3 see him behind the wheel of a truck plowing the streets, which
4 made his family and staff very nervous; and

5 WHEREAS, The phrase "Home Is Where the Heart Is" described
6 Mayor Shaw's consummate love for Dolton; he believed in
7 inclusion and appointed the Village's first African-American
8 police chief, the first female and African-American village
9 attorney, and the first African-American chief of staff; he had
10 the village build a beautiful waterfall at the corner of
11 Lincoln and Park, held the summer Cascade of Jazz events in
12 front of the village hall, and encouraged numerous businesses
13 to make Dolton their home; and

14 WHEREAS, His dynamic, visionary leadership, coupled with
15 his passion for seniors, led him to secure funding to modernize
16 the Dorchester Senior Center and Banquet Facility; his most
17 recent success was securing a contract with Food-4-Less
18 supermarket to locate at Sibley and Greenwood, where
19 construction is now in progress; and

20 WHEREAS, Mayor Shaw's concern for global issues has always
21 been evident; he and the Village frequently hosted Mayor Kofi
22 Adjei Ntim of Kadjebi, Ghana, Dolton's sister city; many
23 discussions centered on how Dolton could help build a library

1 for their children; in 2007, Mayor Shaw sent a delegation of
2 four to Ghana to better understand their culture and customs,
3 as well as attend their 50th anniversary of independence from
4 British rule; in the late 1990s, Mayor Shaw welcomed to the
5 Village another African dignitary, His Royal Highness, Oba
6 Aromolaran II, Owa of Ijeshaland, Nigeria; and

7 WHEREAS, Just days after catastrophic Hurricane Katrina
8 blasted New Orleans and surrounding areas, Mayor Shaw organized
9 a relief effort that provided twenty-two truckloads of food and
10 supplies to the victims; he held a similar drive to provide
11 help for the victims of Haiti's devastating flood; and

12 WHEREAS, An avid golfer, and to let him tell it, "the best
13 in Illinois", Mayor Shaw was known to challenge all comers; in
14 his retirement from the legislature, he spent a good portion of
15 his time with his twin brother and friends accompanying him to
16 various golf courses around Chicago, or to his Orlando home, to
17 enjoy the sun and shoot a few rounds; and

18 WHEREAS, Well-known as culinary experts, he and Robert had
19 daily and weekly cook-off competitions on recipes from the Food
20 Channel; of the two, the Mayor was indeed the better golfer,
21 but despite the mayor's denial, his twin brother Robert holds
22 the cook-off title; and

1 WHEREAS, Mayor William Shaw often spoke of how blessed he
2 was; he began his journey in Hope, Arkansas, and took his final
3 bow in Dolton, Illinois; all the critically important work he
4 did in-between allowed him to leave behind an impressive
5 legacy; his accomplishments are forever etched in time; when
6 God called his name, Mayor Shaw passed away quietly in his
7 Dolton home; and

8 WHEREAS, His parents, as well as three brothers, preceded
9 him in death; he was also preceded in death by Melanie Green,
10 for whom he was a loving father figure; and

11 WHEREAS, At his time of his passing and by his side were
12 his long time and truly dedicated companion, Ms. Deborah Green;
13 his twin brother and closet confidant, Commissioner Robert
14 Shaw; and his faithful son, Victor Andre Shaw; along with
15 those, Mayor Shaw is survived by his sister, Bobby Shaw Brown;
16 his daughter, Gina; his son, Shawn; his granddaughters, Ashley
17 Staples and Asante Norton; his grandson and namesake, William
18 "Little Bill" Skyler Shaw; as well as a hundreds of other
19 family members and friends; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL
21 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
22 his family and friends, the passing of William "Bill" Shaw; and
23 be it further

1 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
2 presented to the loved ones of William "Bill" Shaw as a symbol
3 of our sincere sympathy.